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JOURNAL

OF THE

FIRST CONGRESS OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES,

IN OPPOSITION TO THE

TYRANNICAL ACTS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

HELD AT NEW-YORK, OCTOBER 7, 1765.

New-York :

E. WINCHESTER, 21 ANN-STREET.

1845.

P R E F A C E .

THE following Journal of the first Congress, or Convention, of the American colonies, to oppose the tyrannical Acts of Great Britain, was found (with the official signature of John Cotton, Clerk,) among the papers of the Hon. Caesar Rodney, the Delegate from Delaware, by his nephew, Caesar A. Rodney, Esq., and was by him handed to Mr. Niles, of the "National Register," for publication, in the year 1812, after having been long sought for in vain by the statesmen of that day. Of this interesting and fortunate discovery, Mr. Niles gives a brief account, which he has prefixed to the first page of the Journal. To this statement of Mr. Niles, the present editor has only to add, on the authority of the late Henry Cruger, of this city, (who was in 1774 the defender of our Rights in the British Parliament,*) that the first movement toward this Convention was made by two gentlemen of New York city, Mr. John Cruger and Mr. Robert Livingston, the former of whom was at that time Mayor of the city, and Speaker of the House of Assembly, and took a leading part in every patriotic movement of his day. These gentlemen (with three others) had been appointed a committee† of the House of Assembly to correspond, as well with their agent in Great Britain, as with the Assemblies of the other Colonies, on the subject of opposing the Stamp Act, and other oppressive Acts of Parliament. In the discharge of these duties, Mr. Cruger and Mr. Livingston took great interest, and prosecuted their correspondence with great zeal and assiduity, urging upon the Colonial Assemblies the necessity of holding a Convention of Delegates, to remonstrate and protest against the continued violation of their Rights and Liberties. In compliance with these suggestions, the subject was earnestly discussed in the Assembly of Massachusetts, and a circular letter issued by that body to the Legislatures of the sister Colonies, recommending that the proposed Congress be held in the city of New York on the first Tuesday of October, 1765. At this time and place, the Delegates accordingly assembled, although it was an earlier day than had at first been contemplated, and before the regular sessions of the Assemblies in some of the Colonies took place, to allow of their making an official

* See Appendix.

† As to the appointment of this committee, see page 14.

appointment of Delegates; in consequence of which a rule was adopted to admit as Delegates several committees of the members of Assembly from such Colonies. This was the case with New York, among others; and her Delegates were the corresponding committee above referred to, viz.: Robert R. Livingston, John Cruger, Philip Livingston, William Bayard, Leonard Lispenard. From the pen of the second on the above list, Mr. John Cruger, proceeded the "Declaration of Rights," the first that appeared in America, and from that of Mr. Robert Livingston the admirably written memorial to the king.

This first glorious assembly of the patriotic and patriarchal spirits of our country, has been justly regarded as the *fountain spring* of our revolution—a noble and enviable distinction, accorded it by all the journalists of that period. In the interesting "Sketches and Anecdotes of the Revolution," by the veteran, Major Garden, (of the South Carolina Continental Line,) this Congress is designated the "*orum reipublica*;" and such, beyond a doubt, it was; although the citizens of New York have hitherto listlessly and ingloriously allowed the people of Boston, and other sections of our country, to claim this exalted glory, in the performance of acts which occurred nearly ten years subsequent to its session. Is it not time that we should vindicate the lofty patriotism and noble zeal of our ancestors in this earliest assertion of our Rights and Liberties? Or are the inhabitants of our State and city of the present century to prove themselves for ever deserving of the too general accusation of the civilized world—of being wholly absorbed in the accumulation and hoarding of wealth alone?

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

JOURNAL OF THE FIRST AMERICAN (OR STAMP ACT) CONGRESS, OF 1765.
Remarks of Mr. Niles, in the "National Register," of July, 1812.

"We have several times promised to treat our readers with a correct copy of this venerable manuscript, detailing the first movements of the friends of freedom in the New World. It is an *official* copy, under the signature of John Cotton, Esq., Clerk to that illustrious body; and we have reason to believe *the only one extant*. It was handed to the editor by

his much respected friend, CÆSAR A. RODNEY, Esq., of Delaware, who found it among the papers of his late revered uncle, the estimable and patriotic CÆSAR RODNEY, one of the Delegates, and for many years the great prop and stay of *Whigism* in his native State. On a loose sheet of paper in the manuscript book is a list of the members, which we have prefixed to the Journal itself, in the handwriting of Caesar Rodney. We are thus particular, to show the entire authenticity of this venerable document, which, we are informed, many of our sages have sought for in vain. In this Journal the reader will not find anything to astonish or surprise him, but much to admire and revere. In every line he will discover a lofty spirit of decision and firmness, totally irreconcilable with a state of servitude, and highly worthy of imitation at the present day. The great difficulties encountered by those who originated and formed this Congress, unknown to the laws, and in opposition to the royalists invested with power, are most honorable to their cause and its agents. With an eye steadily fixed upon freedom, they cast behind them the cold maxims of prudence, and nobly resolved to systematize an opposition to the growing tyranny of the "mother country." They did so, and therein generated a spirit of *union*, that finally brought about the *independence* of these United States, and led to the establishment of our present happy *Constitution*."

In a subsequent number of "Niles's National Register," under the present able editor, are the following remarks upon this ancient document:

"THE FIRST AMERICAN CONGRESS.—Competition for the honor of originating the American Revolution, has been the occasion of retrieving a precious relic from oblivion. It is to be hoped that the incentive may still operate, for the sake of making the present as well as future generations better acquainted with the men and the principles of that eventful period. It is an honorable emulation, that of citizens of the respective States claiming each for his own State, the full quantum of credit to which its participation therein may have entitled it. It is more, it is a duty—a duty to the memory and to the services of our forefathers, which descendants would be derelict in neglecting.

"A New York correspondent, whose letter we published a few numbers back, brought prominently forward the pretensions of that State, as a competitor with Massachusetts, Virginia, North Carolina, or any other State that may have claimed to have taken the lead in a direction toward National Independence, or to have given the revolutionary ball the first impulse. New York was certainly not without intelligent and intrepid defenders of freedom, in the dispute between the Colonies and the mother country. So numerous, indeed, were they, that it would seem almost in-

vidious to name even the Crugers, the Livingstons, the Schuylers, the Clintons, the Van Rensselaers, and others, from the mass of the deserving, except as mere specimens representing the spirit that pervaded.

“The more this subject is investigated, the more obvious will become the fact, that the American Revolution was essentially a wider diffused, a more general impulse, enlisting not only a greater number of distinct communities, independent of each other, than had hardly ever been so associated before, but that the proportion of individual, *personal* participation, a participation in which individual *judgment* was called into requisition, and individual *responsibility* incurred, had *seldom* been equalled. It was no momentary impulse—no burst of passion. A cool, deliberate process, year after year in progress, interrupted at every stage by respectful, unanswerable, and therefore unanswered, remonstrances. When every expedient, short of *resistance*, had been tried, over and over, resistance itself was tried, without an attempt to assert independence. When the last drop was drained from the cup of suffering, short of *humiliation*, the whole American people were ready, (Tories excepted,) with ‘Declarations of Independence,’ rather than take one drop from the cup of *submission*. Americans had not to learn to be freemen.

“Not only have the different *Colonies* each its claim to distinction, in *asserting* the rights of freemen on that occasion, in language and in mode, which commands the admiration of all impartial historians, but every County, Town and Hundred of every colony had champions pressing to the front rank in a cause which all regarded as involving their own and their country’s freedom. A purer or fuller current of well-asserted RIGHTS of MAN never flowed from press and forum than that struggle witnessed.”

The proposal for holding a Congress of Delegates from the respective Colonies, was made by the corresponding committee of the New York Assembly, (appointed in October, 1764,) and was repeatedly agitated in the different legislatures. At length the Assembly of Massachusetts issued a circular letter, proposing the first Tuesday of October, 1765, as the day of their meeting, at the city of New York. To this the other colonies assented, and on that day (or rather on the first *Monday*,) the proposed Congress commenced their session, the Journal of whose proceedings is subjoined.

JOURNAL

OF THE

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS OF 1765.

CIRCULAR TO THE COLONIES.

Boston, June, 1765.

SIR: The house of representatives of this province, in the present session of general court, have unanimously agreed to propose a meeting, as soon as may be, of committees from the house of representatives or burgesses, of the several British colonies on this continent, to consult together on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the operation of the acts of parliament, for levying duties and taxes on the colonies; and to consider of a general and united, dutiful, loyal and humble representation of their condition to his majesty and to the parliament, and to implore relief.

The house of representatives of this province have also voted to propose that such meeting be at the city of New-York, in the province of New-York, on the first Tuesday in October next, and have appointed the committee of three of their members to attend that service, with such as the other houses of representatives or burgesses, in the

several colonies, may think fit to appoint to meet them; and the committee of the house of representatives of this province, are directed to repair to the said New-York, on the first Tuesday in October next, accordingly; if, therefore, your honorable house should agree to this proposal, it would be acceptable, that as early notice of it as possible might be transmitted to the speaker of the house of representatives of this province.

SAMUEL WHITE, *Speaker*.

In consequence of the foregoing circular letter, the following gentlemen met at New-York, in the province of New-York, on Monday, the 7th of October, 1765, viz:—

Delegates to the Congress of 1765.

<i>Massachusetts</i> .—James Otis,	<i>New Jersey</i> .—Robert Ogden,
Oliver Partridge,	Hendrick Fisher,
Timothy Ruggles.	Joseph Borden.
<i>Rhode Island</i> .—Metcalf Bowler,	<i>Pennsylvania</i> .—John Dickinson,
Henry Ward.	John Morton,
<i>Connecticut</i> .—Eliphalet Dyer,	George Bryan.
David Rowland,	<i>Delaware</i> .—Thomas M'Kean,
William S. Johnson.	Cæsar Rodney.
<i>New-York</i> .—Robert R. Livingston,	<i>Maryland</i> .—William Murdock,
John Cruger,	Edward Tilghman,
Philip Livingston,	Thomas Ringgold.
William Bayard,	<i>S. Carolina</i> .—Thomas Lynch,
Leonard Lispenard.	Christopher Gadsden,
	John Rutledge.

New-Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia, were not represented in this congress. But their assemblies wrote that they would agree to whatever was done by the congress.

From the province of *Massachusetts Bay*, James Otis, Oliver Partridge, and Timothy Ruggles, Esqs., who produced their appointment as follows, viz:—

*To James Otis, Oliver Partridge, and Timothy Ruggles,
Esquires.*

GENTLEMEN: The house of representatives of this province, have appointed you a committee to meet at New-York on the first Tuesday in October next, such committees as the other houses of representatives or burgesses in the several colonies on this continent, may think fit to appoint, to consult together on the present circumstances of the colonies, on the difficulties to which they are, and must be reduced by the operation of the late acts of parliament. By this choice, the house has reposed in you a trust of singular importance, and have just reason to expect you will give your utmost attention to it. In case you should receive advice that the houses of representatives or burgesses of the other colonies, or any of them, agree to such committees, to join you in this interesting affair, you are directed to repair to New-York at the time appointed, and endeavor to unite with them in sentiment, and agree upon such representations, as may tend to preserve our rights and privileges. And it is the opinion of this house, that no address or representation shall be esteemed the act of this house, unless it is agreed to and signed by the major part of their committee.

If it should be said, that we are in any manner represented in parliament, you must by no means concede to it; it is an opinion which this house cannot see the least reason to adopt.

Further, the house think that such a representation of the colonies as British subjects are to enjoy, would be attended with the greatest difficulty, if it is not absolutely impracticable, and therefore, you are not to urge or consent to any proposal for any representation, if such be made in the congress.

It is the expectation of the house, that a most loyal and

dutiful address to his majesty and the parliament, will be prepared by the congress, praying as well for the removal of the grievances the colonies labor under at present, as for preventing others for the future ; which petitions, if drawn up, as far as you shall be able to judge, agreeable to the mind of the house, you are empowered to sign and forward ; and you are to lay a copy of the same before this house, and make report of your proceedings upon your return.*

It is the hearty prayer of this house, that the congress may be endued with that wisdom which is from above, and that their councils and determinations may be attended with the divine blessings.

SAMUEL WHITE, *Speaker*.

From the colony of *Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, Metcalf Bowler, and Henry Ward, Esqs., who produced the following appointment, viz :

By the honorable SAMUEL WARD, governor, captain-general and commander-in-chief of and over the English colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New-England in America.

To Metcalf Bowler, and Henry Ward, Esqs.

GREETING :

Whereas, the general assembly of this province have nominated and appointed you, the said Metcalf Bowler and Henry Ward, to be commissioners in behalf of this colony, to meet such commissioners as are or shall be appointed by the other British governments in North America, to meet at New-York on the first Tuesday of October next.

*The reader may remark in all these commissions with how great authority the *right of instruction* is assumed.—ED. REG.

I do, therefore, hereby authorize and empower, and commission you, the said Metcalf Bowler and Henry Ward, forthwith to repair to New-York, and there, in behalf of this colony, to meet and join with the other commissioners in consulting together on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the operation of the act of parliament for levying duties and taxes upon the colonies ; and to consider of a general and united, dutiful, loyal and humble representation to his majesty and the parliament. and to implore relief. And you are also hereby empowered to conclude and agree with the other commissioners, upon such measures as you shall think necessary and proper for obtaining redress of the grievances of the colonies, agreeably to the instructions given you by the general assembly of this colony.

Given under my hand and the seal of the said colony this 16th day of September, 1765, and in the fifth year of his majesty's reign.

SAMUEL WARD.

By his honor's command.

HENRY WARD, *Secretary*.

From the colony of *Connecticut*—Eliphalet Dyer, David Rowland, Wm. Samuel Johnson. Esqs., who produced the following appointment, viz :

At a general assembly of the governor and company of the colony of *Connecticut*, holden at Hartford, by special order of his honor the governor of said colony, on the 19th day of September, Anno Dom. 1765.

Whereas, it has been proposed that a congress be attended by commissioners from the several governments on this continent, to confer upon a general, united, humble, loyal and dutiful representation to his majesty and the parliament, of the present circumstances of the colonies and

the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the operation of the acts of parliament for laying duties and taxes on the colonies, and to implore relief.

Resolved by this assembly, That Eliphalet Dyer, David Rowland, and William Samuel Johnson, Esqrs., or any two of them, be, and are hereby appointed commissioners, on behalf of this colony, to repair to New-York, to attend the proposed congress, in the matters above referred to ; and his honor is hereby desired to commission them accordingly.

A true copy, examined by

GEORGE WYLLYS, *Secretary*.

At a general assembly of the governor and company of the colony of Connecticut, holden at Hartford, by special order of his honor the governor of said colony, on the 19th day of September, Anno Dom. 1765.

Instructions to the commissioners of this colony, appointed to meet commissioners from the other colonies at New-York, on the first Tuesday of October next.

GENTLEMEN : You are to repair to the said city of New-York, at said time, or at the time which, according to the intelligence you may receive of the convening of the other commissioners, it may appear to you seasonable and best, to consult together with them on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced, by the operation of the acts of parliament for levying duties and taxes on the colonies, and to consider of and prepare a general and united, dutiful, loyal and humble representation of their condition to his majesty and the parliament, and to implore relief, &c. In your proceedings you are to take care that you form no such junction with the other commissioners as will subject you to the major vote of the commissioners present.

You are to inform the governor and general assembly at

the session in October next, of all such proceedings, as appear to you needful and convenient to be communicated for consideration ; and to observe all such further instructions as you may receive ; and you are to report your doings with the doings of the commissioners at such meeting to the general assembly of this colony, for acceptance and approbation.

A true copy, examined by

GEORGE WYLLYS, *Secretary*.

Thomas Fitch, Esq., governor and commander-in-chief of his majesty's colony of Connecticut in
[L. s.] New England, in America.

To Eliphalet Dyer, David Rowland, and William Samuel Johnson, Esqrs.

GREETING :

Whereas, the general assembly of the said colony of Connecticut, at their session holden at Hartford, on the nineteenth day of this instant, September, nominated and appointed you, or any two of you, to be commissioners on behalf of this colony, to repair to New-York to attend a congress proposed to be held there by commissioners from the several governments on this continent to confer upon a general and united, loyal, humble and dutiful representation to his majesty and the parliament, of the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the operation of the acts of parliament, for levying duties and taxes on the colonies, and to implore relief, &c., and have desired me to commission you accordingly.

I do, therefore, reposing a special trust and confidence in your loyalty, ability and good conduct, hereby constitute, authorize and commission the said Eliphalet Dyer, David Rowland and William Samuel Johnson, Esqs, or any two

of you, for and on behalf of this colony, to repair to the said city of New-York on the first day of October next, or at the time which, according to the intelligence you may receive of the convening of the other commissioners, may appear to you seasonable and best, to confer and consult with them or such of them as shall be present upon the convening, the matters and things before mentioned, for the purposes, aforesaid, wherein you are to observe such instructions as you have received, or shall further receive from the general assembly of the said colony of Connecticut, agreeable to the important trust reposed in you.

Given under my hand, and the public seal of said colony of Connecticut, within the same, the twenty-first day of September, in the fifth year of the reign of our sovereign lord George the third, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, &c., Anno Domini, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five.

THOMAS FITCH.

By his honor's command.

GEORGE WYLLYS, *Secretary*.

From the colony of *New-York*, Robert R. Livingston, John Cruger, Philip Livingston, William Bayard, Leonard Lispenard, Esqrs.

Appeared, and informed the congress that since the above letter from the speaker of the house of representatives of Massachusetts Bay, the general assembly of New-York have not had an opportunity of meeting, but that they confidently expect, from the general sense of the people, and such of the representatives as they have had an opportunity of speaking to, that when the assembly does meet, (which will be probably very soon) the congress will be approved, and a regular committee for the purpose appointed; in the meantime they think themselves in some measures authorised to meet the congress, by the following vote, viz :

Extract from the votes and proceedings of the general assembly of the colony of New York.

Die Sabati, 9h, A. M., the 4th April, 1761.

Mr. Speaker represented to this house, that his situation in the country rendered it vastly inconvenient to him alone to correspond with the agent of this colony, at the court of Great Britain, and more especially so, during the recess of the house.

Ordered, That the members of the city of New-York, or the major part of them, be a committee of correspondence to correspond with the agent of this colony at the court of Great Britain during the recess of the house, concerning the public affairs of this colony ; and that they lay before the house copies of all such letters as they may write to him, and also all such letters and advices as they may receive from him respecting the same.

Die Jovis, 9h, A. M. 9th December, 1762.

Alderman Livingston, from the committee appointed to correspond with the agency of this colony at the court of Great Britain, acquainted the house, that the committee conceived it expedient that one or more members should be added to the said committee, to correspond with the said agent about the affairs of this colony.

Ordered, That Robert R. Livingston, Esq., be added to and be made one of the said committee of correspondence.

Die Jovis, 9h, P. M. the 18th October, 1764.

Ordered, That the said committee appointed to correspond with the said agent, be also a committee during the recess of the house, to write to and correspond with the several assemblies or committees of assemblies on this continent, on the subject matter of the act, commonly called the

stamp act, of the act restraining paper bills of credit in the colonies, from being a legal tender, and of the several other acts of parliament lately passed, with relation to the trade of the northern colonies ; and also on the subject of the impending dangers, which threaten the colonies of being taxed by laws to be passed in Great Britain.

Extract from, compared and examined with the records of the proceedings of the general assembly of the colony of New-York, by
ABRAHAM LOTT, *Clerk*.

From the colony of *New Jersey*, Robert Ogden, Hendrick Fisher, Joseph Borden, Esqs., who produced the following appointment, viz :

At a meeting of a large number of the representatives of the colony of New Jersey, at the house of Robert Sproul, October 3d, 1765.

At the desire of the speaker of the house of representatives as aforesaid ; and at the earnest request of many of our constituents, to consider of some method for humbly loyally and dutifully joining in a petition to his majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to recommend to the parliament of Great Britain to redress our grievances by repealing several of the late acts of parliament affecting the northern colonies, particularly that called the stamp act.

Robert Ogden, Esq., Hendrick Fisher, Esq., and Joseph Borden, Esq., were directed to attend at the congress now met at New York, and join the measures there to be concluded, for the purposes aforesaid, and to make report of their proceedings therein, at the next meeting of the general assembly.

Signed by order,

JOHN LAWRENCE.

From the province of *Pennsylvania*, John Dickinson, John Morton, George Bryan, Esqrs., who produced the fol-

lowing appointment in general assembly, September the 11th, 1765, A. M.

The house resumed the consideration of their resolution of yesterday, to appoint a committee of three or more of their members, to attend the general congress of committees from the several assemblies on this continent, to be held at New-York on the first of October next, and, after some time spent therein,

Resolved, That Mr. Speaker, Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Bryan, and Mr. Morton be, and they are, hereby, nominated and appointed to that service.

A true extract copy from the journals.

CHARLES MOORE, *Clerk of the Assembly*.

Extract from the journals of the house of representatives for the province of Pennsylvania.

Wednesday, Sept. 11th, 1765, A. M.

The committee appointed to prepare instructions for the deputies nominated by this house to attend the proposed congress at New-York, on the first of next month, reported an essay for that purpose, which they presented to the chair ; and the same being read and agreed to by the house, follows in these words, viz :

Instructions to the committee appointed to meet the committees of the other British continental colonies, at New-York :

It is desired by the house that you shall, with the committees that have been appointed by the several British colonies on this continent to meet at New-York, consult together on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties they are and must be reduced to by the late acts of parliament, for the levying duties and taxes upon these colonies ; and join with the said committees in

loyal and dutiful addresses to the king, and to the two houses of parliament, humbly representing the condition of these colonies, and imploring relief, by a repeal of the said acts; and you are strictly required to take care that such addresses in which you join, are drawn up in the most decent and respectful terms; so also to avoid every expression that can give the least offence to his majesty or to either house of parliament.

You are also directed to make report of your proceedings herein to the succeeding assembly.

A true extract from the journals.

CHARLES MOORE, *Clerk of the Assembly.*

September 26th, 1765.

From the government of the counties of *New Castle, Kent and Sussex, Delaware.*—Cæsar Rodney and Thomas M’Kean, Esqrs., whose appointment are as follows, viz:—

Cæsar Rodney and Thomas M’Kean, Esqrs., appeared from the government of the counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex, upon Delaware, and informed this congress, that the representatives of the said government could not meet in general assembly after the above letter was wrote, and before the first day of this instant; that the said assembly consists only of eighteen members, fifteen of whom have appointed the other three to attend here, &c., by three several instruments of writing, which are in the words following, to wit:

To all whom these presents may come:

KNOW YE, That we, the subscribers, five of the representatives of the freemen of the government of the counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex, upon Delaware, sensible of the weighty and oppressive taxes imposed upon the good people of this government by divers late acts of parliament

and of the great infringement of the liberties and just established rights of all his majesty's colonies on this continent, occasioned by the late measures in England; and being of opinion that the method proposed by the honorable house of assembly of the province of Massachusetts Bay, is the most likely to obtain a redress of these grievances; and taking into consideration the misfortune we at present labor under, in not having it in our power to convene, as a house, and in a regular manner, to appoint a committee; yet zealous for the happiness of our constituents, think it our duty, in this way, to serve them as much as in us lies, assured of the hearty approbation of any future house of assembly of this government; and, therefore, do hereby nominate and appoint Jacob Kollock, Thomas M'Kean, and Cæsar Rodney, Esqrs., three of the representatives of the same government, a committee, to repair to the city of New-York on the first day of October next, and there to join with the committees sent by the other provinces, in one united and loyal petition to his majesty, and remonstrate to the honorable house of commons of Great Britain, against the aforesaid acts of parliament, therein dutifully, yet most firmly, asserting the colonies' right of exclusion from parliamentary taxation; and praying that they may not, in any instance, be stripped of their ancient and most valuable privilege of a trial by their peers, and most humbly imploring relief.

In testimony whereof, we have hereunto set our hands, at New Castle, the twenty-first day of September, Annoque Domini, 1765.

EVAN RICE,
THOMAS COOK,
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG,
GEORGE MONROE,
JOHN EVANS.

Kent county, to wit :

We, whose names are here underwritten, members of the general assembly of the government of the counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, upon Delaware, for the said county of Kent, though sensible of the impropriety of assuming the functions of assemblymen during the recess of our house, yet zealous to concur in any measure which may be productive of advantage to this government and the other British colonies on the continent of America in general, have appointed, and, as much as in us lies, do appoint, Jacob Kollock, Esq., Cæsar Rodney Esq., and Thomas M'Kean, Esq., members of said assembly, to be a committee, to meet with the other committees already appointed, or to be appointed, by the several and respective assemblies of said other colonies, at the city of New-York, on the first Tuesday in October next, in conjunction with the other committees, to consider of the present distressful circumstances of the said colonies; occasioned, in some measure as (we apprehend) by several late acts of parliament, and to join with them in an humble address to his most gracious majesty, and the parliament of Great Britain, for the redress of our grievances, or in any other expedient that shall be agreed on, by the said committees, which may tend to promote the utility and welfare of the British dominions in America.

JOHN VINING,
JOHN CATON,
JOHN BARNES,
WILLIAM KILLEN,
VINCENT LOCKERMAN.

Sept. 13th, 1765.

Sussex county, to wit :

We, whose names are here underwritten, members of the general assembly of the government of the counties of

New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, upon Delaware, for the said county of Sussex, though sensible of the impropriety of assuming the functions of assemblymen during the recess of our house, yet zealous to concur in any measure which may be productive of advantage to this government and the other British colonies on the continent of America in general, have appointed, and as much as in us lies do appoint Jacob Kollock, Esq., Cæsar Rodney, Esq., and Thomas M'Kean, Esq., members of the said assembly, to be a committee, to meet with the other committees already appointed, or to be appointed, by the several and respective assemblies of the said other colonies, at the city of New-York, on the first Tuesday in October next, in conjunction with the said other committees, to consider of the present distressful circumstances of the said colonies, occasioned, in some measure (as we apprehend) by several late acts of parliament ; and to join with them in an humble address to his most gracious majesty and the parliament of Great Britain for redress of our grievances, or any other expedient that shall be agreed on by the said committees, which may tend to promote the utility and welfare of the British dominions in America.

DAVID HALL,
BENJ'N BURTON,
LEVIN CRAPPER,
THO'S ROBINSON,
JACOB KOLLOCK, jun.

Sept. 17th, 1765.

From the province of *Maryland*.—William Murdock, Edward Tilghman, and Thomas Ringgold, Esqrs.

*Instructions from the honorable the lower house of assembly
of the province of Maryland :*

To William Murdock, Edward Tilghman, and Thomas

Ringgold, esqrs. a committee appointed to join the several committees from the several colonies in America, at New-York.

GENTLEMEN: You are to repair immediately to the city of New-York, in the province of New-York, and there join with the committees from the houses of representatives of the other colonies, in a general and united, loyal and humble representation to his majesty and the British parliament, of the circumstances and condition of the British colonies and plantations, and to pray relief from the burthens and restraints lately laid on their trade and commerce; and especially from the taxes imposed by an act of the last session of parliament, granting and applying certain stamp duties and other duties in the British colonies and plantations of America, whereby they are deprived, in some instances, of that invaluable privilege of Englishmen and British subjects—trials by juries; that you take care that such representation shall humbly and decently, but expressly contain an assertion of the rights of the colonies to be exempt from all and every taxation and imposition upon their persons and properties to which they do not consent in a legislative way, either by themselves or their representatives, by them freely chosen and appointed.

Signed by order of the house.

ROBERT LLOYD, *Speaker*.

From the Province of *South Carolina*.—Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsden, and John Rutledge, Esqrs., who produced this appointment :

Thursday, 25th July, 1765.—The house, (according to order), took into consideration the letter from the speaker of the house of representatives of the — of Massa-

chusetts Bay, laid laid before them on Friday last—and, debate arising thereon, and some time spent therein,

Ordered, That the said letter be referred to a committee of the following gentlemen, viz : Capt. Gadsden, Mr. Wright, Mr. Gaillard, Mr. Wragg, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Pinckney, Colonel Lawrence, Mr. Rutledge, Mr. Manigault, and Mr. Drayton.

Friday, 26th July, 1765.—Captain Gadsden reported, from the committee appointed to consider of the letter sent from the speaker of the house of representatives of the province of Massachusetts Bay to the speaker of this house, and to report their opinion thereon of the expediency and utility of the measures therein proposed, and the best means of effecting the relief therein mentioned.

That they are of opinion the measure therein proposed is prudent and necessary, and therefore recommend to the house to send a committee to meet the committees from the houses of representatives or burgesses of the several British colonies on the continent, at New-York, on the first Tuesday in October next.

That the said committee be ordered to consult there, with those other committees, on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties which they are and must be reduced to, by the operation of the acts of parliament for levying duties and taxes on the colonies ; and to consider of a general and united, loyal and humble representation of their condition to his majesty and the parliament, and to implore relief ; that the result of their consultation shall, at their return, be immediately laid before the house, to be confirmed or not, as the house shall think proper.

And the said report being delivered in at the clerk's table and read a second time, the question was severally put, that the house do agree to the first, second and third

paragraphs of this report. It was resolved in the affirmative.

Friday, 2d August, 1765.—Motion being made, *Resolved*, that this house will provide a sum sufficient to defray the charges and expenses of a committee of three gentlemen on account of their going to, convening at, and returning from the meeting of the several committees proposed to assemble at New-York, on the first Tuesday in October next, to consult there with those other committees on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties which they are and must be reduced to, by the operation of the acts of parliament for levying duties and taxes on the colonies, and to consider of a general, united, dutiful, loyal and humble representation of their condition to his majesty and the parliament, and to implore relief.

Ordered, That the public treasurer do advance out of any moneys in his hands, to the said committee, a sum not exceeding six hundred pounds sterling, for the purpose aforesaid.

Resolved, That this house will reimburse the treasurer the said sum.

Ordered, That the following gentlemen be appointed a committee for the purpose aforesaid, viz: Mr. Thomas Lynch, Mr. Christopher Gadsden, and Mr. John Rutledge.

Thursday, 8th August, 1765.—*Ordered*, That the said speaker inform Thomas Lynch, Christopher Gadsden, and John Rutledge, Esquires, that they are appointed a committee to meet the committees of the several other colonies on the continent, on the first Tuesday in October next, at New-York; and that he do acquaint them it is the desire of the house, that they repair to New-York on the said first Tuesday in October next, for the purpose

mentioned in the report of the committee, as agreed to by this house on Friday the 26th day of July last.

Ordered, That three copies of the proceedings of this house relative to the said matter be made out, and signed by the speaker, and that he deliver one of the said copies to each of the said gentlemen.

RAWLINS LOWNDES, *Speaker*.

Then the said committees proceeded to choose a chairman by ballot; and Timothy Ruggles, Esq. on sorting and counting the votes, appeared to have a majority—and thereupon was placed in the chair.

Resolved, nem. con. That Mr. *John Cotton* be clerk to this congress during the continuance thereof.

Then the congress took into consideration the several appointments of the committees from New-York, New Jersey, and the government of the lower counties on Delaware—and

Resolved, nem. con. That the same are sufficient to qualify the gentlemen therein named, to sit in this congress.

Resolved, also, That the committees of each colony, shall have one voice only, in determining any questions that shall arise in the congress.

Then the congress adjourned until to morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Tuesday, October 8th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment. Upon motion, voted, that the provinces be* is adjourned to ——. Voted, That Mr. Justice Livingston, Mr. McKean, and Mr. Rutledge be a committee to inspect the proceedings and minutes, and correct the same.

Then the congress took into consideration the rights

* There appears to be some error here.—ED. NATIONAL REG.

and privileges of the British American colonists, with the several inconveniencies and hardships to which they are, and must be subjected by the operation of several late acts of parliament, particularly the act called the stamp act; and after some time spent therein, the same was postponed for further consideration.

Then the congress adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Wednesday, Oct. 9th, 1765, A. M.—Then the congress met according to adjournment. The congress resumed the consideration of the rights and privileges of the British American colonists, &c., the same was referred after sundry debates, for further consideration.

Then the congress adjourned until to-morrow morning, 11 o'clock.

Thursday, Oct. 10th, 1765, A. M.—Then the congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c., as yesterday—and then adjourned to 10 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

Friday, Oct. 11th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c., as yesterday—and then adjourned to 10 o'clock, to-morrow morning.

Saturday, Oct. 12th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c., as yesterday—and then adjourned to Monday morning next, 10 o'clock.

Monday, Oct. 14th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c., as on Saturday last—and then adjourned until to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Tuesday, Oct. 15th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c., as yes-

terday—and then adjourned to to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Wednesday, Oct. 16th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c. as yesterday—and then adjourned to to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Thursday, Oct. 17th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c. as yesterday—and then adjourned to to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Friday, Oct. 18th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c. as yesterday—and then adjourned to to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Saturday, Oct. 19th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment, and resumed, &c. as yesterday; and upon mature deliberation, agreed to the following declaration* of the rights and grievances of the colonists in America, which were ordered to be inserted.

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

The members of this congress, sincerely devoted, with the warmest sentiments of affection and duty to his majesty's person and government, inviolably attached to the present happy establishment of the protestant succession, and with minds deeply impressed by a sense of the present and impending misfortunes of the British colonies on this continent; having considered as maturely as time would permit, the circumstances of said colonies, esteem it our indispensable duty to make the following declarations, of our humble opinions, respecting the most essential

This "DECLARATION OF RIGHTS," the first manifesto of the first congress of North America, was from the pen of JOHN CRUGER, a delegate to said congress from New-York, and who at the same time was speaker of the assembly of that colony, and mayor of the city of New-York.—ED. NAT. REGISTER.

rights and liberties of the colonists, and of the grievances under which they labor, by reason of several late acts of parliament.

1st. That his majesty's subjects in these colonies, owe the same allegiance to the crown of Great Britain, that is owing from his subjects born within the realm, and all due subordination to that august body, the parliament of Great Britain.

2d. That his majesty's liege subjects in these colonies are entitled to all the inherent rights and privileges of his natural born subjects within the kingdom of Great Britain,

3d. That it is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted rights of Englishmen, that no taxes should be imposed on them, but with their own consent, given personally, or by their representatives.

4th. That the people of these colonies are not, and from their local circumstances, cannot be represented in the house of commons in Great Britain.

5th. That the only representatives of the people of these colonies, are persons chosen therein, by themselves ; and that no taxes ever have been, or can be constitutionally imposed on them, but by their respective legislatures.

6th. That all supplies to the crown, being free gifts of the people, it is unreasonable and inconsistent with the principles and spirit of the British constitution, for the people of Great Britain to grant to his majesty the property of the colonists.

7th. That trial by jury is the inherent and invaluable right of every British subject in these colonies.

8th. That the late act of parliament entitled, an act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, and other duties in the British colonies and plantations in America, &c., by imposing taxes on the inhabitants of these colonies, and the said act, and several other acts, by extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty beyond its ancient

limits, have a manifest tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonists.

9th. That the duties imposed by several late acts of parliament, from the peculiar circumstances of these colonies, will be extremely burthensome and grievous, and from the scarcity of specie, the payment of them absolutely impracticable.

10th. That as the profits of the trade of these colonies ultimately centre in Great Britain, to pay for the manufactures which they are obliged to take from thence, they eventually contribute very largely to all supplies granted there to the crown.

11th. That the restrictions imposed by several late acts of parliament, on the trade of these colonies, will render them unable to purchase the manufactures of Great Britain.

12th. That the increase, prosperity; and happiness of these colonies, depend on the full and free enjoyment of their rights and liberties, and an intercourse, with Great Britain, mutually affectionate and advantageous.

13th. That it is the right of the British subjects in these colonies, to petition the king or either house of parliament.

Lastly, That it is the indispensable duty of these colonies to the best of sovereigns, to the mother country, and to themselves, to endeavor, by a loyal and dutiful address to his majesty, and humble application to both houses of parliament, to procure the repeal of the act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, of all clauses of any other acts of parliament, whereby the jurisdiction of the admiralty is extended as aforesaid, and of the other late acts for the restriction of the American commerce.

Upon motion, voted, That Robert R. Livingston, William Samuel Johnson, and William Murdock, Esqrs., be a

committee to prepare an address to his majesty, and lay the same before the congress on Monday next.

Voted also, that John Rutledge, Edward Tilghman, and Philip Livingston, Esqrs., be a committee to prepare a memorial and petition to the lords in parliament, and lay the same before the congress on Monday next.

Voted, also, that Thomas Lynch, James Otis, and Thomas McKean, Esqrs. be a committee to prepare a petition to the house of commons of Great Britain, and lay the same before the congress on Monday next.

Then the congress adjourned to Monday next, at 12 o'clock.

Monday, Oct. 21st, 1765, A. M.—The committee appointed to prepare and bring in an address to his majesty, did report, that they have essayed a draught for that purpose, which they laid on the table, and humbly submitted to the correction of the congress.

The said address was read, and, after sundry amendments, the same was approved of by the congress, and ordered to be engrossed.

The committee, appointed to prepare and bring in a memorial and petition to the lords in parliament, did report that that they had essayed a draught for that purpose, which they laid on the table, and humbly submitted to the correction of the congress.

The said address was read, and after sundry amendments, the same was approved of by the congress, and ordered to be engrossed.

The committee appointed to prepare and bring in a petition to the house of commons of Great Britain, did report that they had essayed a draught for that purpose, which they laid on the table, and humbly submitted to the correction of the congress.

The said address was read, and, after sundry amend-

ments, the same was approved of by the congress, and ordered to be engrossed.

Then the congress adjourned to to-morrow morning, at 9 o'clock.

Tuesday, Oct. 22d, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment. The address to his majesty being engrossed, was read and compared, and is as follows, viz :

To the King's most excellent majesty.

The petition of the Frecholders and other Inhabitants of the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, New-York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the government of the counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex, upon Delaware, and province of Maryland,*

Most humbly sheweth,

That the inhabitants of these colonies, unanimously devoted with the warmest sentiments of duty and affection to your sacred person and government, and inviolably attached to the present happy establishment of the protestant succession in your illustrious house, and deeply sensible of your royal attention to their prosperity and happiness, humbly beg leave to approach the throne, by representing to your majesty, that these colonies were originally planted by subjects of the British crown, who, animated with the spirit of liberty, encouraged by your majesty's royal predecessors, and confiding in the public faith for the enjoyment of all the rights and liberties essential to freedom, emigrated from their native country to this continent, and, by their successful perseverance, in the midst of innumerable dangers and difficulties, together

* South Carolina, we presume, was omitted in the copy.—ED.

with a profusion of their blood and treasure, have happily added these vast and extensive dominions to the Empire of Great Britain.

That, for the enjoyment of these rights and liberties, several governments were early formed in the said colonies, with full power of legislation, agreeably to the principles of the English constitution;—that, under these governments, these liberties, thus vested in their ancestors, and transmitted to their posterity, have been exercised and enjoyed, and by the inestimable blessings thereof, under the favor of Almighty God, the inhospitable deserts of America have been converted into flourishing counties; science, humanity, and the knowledge of divine truths diffused through remote regions of ignorance, infidelity, and barbarism; the number of British subjects wonderfully increased, and the wealth and power of Great Britain proportionably augmented.

That, by means of these settlements and the unparalleled success of your majesty's arms, a foundation is now laid for rendering the British empire the most extensive and powerful of any recorded in history; our connection with this empire we esteem our greatest happiness and security, and humbly conceive it may now be so established by your royal wisdom, as to endure to the latest period of time; this, with the most humble submission to your majesty, we apprehend will be most effectually accomplished by fixing the pillars thereof on liberty and justice, and securing the inherent rights and liberties of your subjects here, upon the principles of the English constitution. To this constitution, these two principles are essential; the rights of your faithful subjects freely to grant to your majesty such aids as are required for the support of your government over them, and other public exigencies; and trials by their peers. By the one they are secured from unreasonable impositions, and by the

other from the arbitrary decisions of the executive power. The continuation of these liberties to the inhabitants of America, we ardently implore, as absolutely necessary to unite the several parts of your wide extended dominions, in that harmony so essential to the preservation and happiness of the whole. Protected in these liberties, the emoluments Great Britain receives from us, however great at present, are inconsiderable, compared with those she has the fairest prospect of acquiring. By this protection, she will for ever secure to herself the advantages of conveying to all Europe, the merchandize which America furnishes, and for supplying, through the same channel, whatsoever is wanted from thence. Here opens a boundless source of wealth and naval strength. Yet these immense advantages, by the abridgement of those invaluable rights and liberties, by which our growth has been nourished, are in danger of being for ever lost, and our subordinate legislatures in effect rendered useless by the late acts of parliament imposing duties and taxes on these colonies, and extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty here, beyond its ancient limits; statutes by which your majesty's commons in Britain undertake absolutely to dispose of the property of their fellow-subjects in America without their consent, and for the enforcing whereof, they are subjected to the determination of a single judge, in a court unrestrained by the wise rules of the common law, the birthright of Englishmen, and the safeguard of their persons and properties.

The invaluable rights of taxing ourselves and trial by our peers, of which we implore your majesty's protection, are not, we most humbly conceive, unconstitutional, but confirmed by the Great Charter of English liberties. On the first of these rights the honorable house of commons found their practice of originating money, a right enjoyed by the kingdom of Ireland, by the clergy of England, un-

til relinquished by themselves; a right, in fine, which all other your majesty's English subjects, both within and without the realm, have hitherto enjoyed.

With hearts, therefore, impressed with the most indelible characters of gratitude to your majesty, and to the memory of the kings of your illustrious house, whose reigns have been signally distinguished by their auspicious influence on the prosperity of the British dominions; and convinced by the most affecting proofs of your majesty's paternal love to all your people, however distant, and your unceasing and benevolent desires to promote their happiness; we most humbly beseech your majesty that you will be graciously pleased to take into your royal consideration the distresses of your faithful subjects on this continent, and to lay the same before your majesty's parliament, and to afford them such relief as, in your royal wisdom, their unhappy circumstances shall be judged to require.

And your petitioners will pray, &c.

The memorial to the lords in parliament being engrossed, was read and compared, and is as follows, viz :

To the right honorable the Lords spiritual and temporal of Great Britain in parliament assembled:

The memorial of the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, New-York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the government of the counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex, upon Delaware, and province of Maryland, in America,

Most humbly sheweth,

'That his majesty's liege subjects in his American

colonies, though they acknowledge a due subordination to that august body the British parliament, are entitled, in the opinion of your memorialists, to all the inherent rights and liberties of the natives of Great Britain, and have ever since the settlement of the said colonies, exercised those rights and liberties, as far as their local circumstances would permit.

That your memorialists humbly conceive that one of the most essential rights of these colonists, which they have ever till lately uninterruptedly enjoyed, to be trial by jury.

That your memorialists also humbly conceive another of these essential rights, to be the exemption from all taxes, but such as are imposed on the people by the several legislatures in these colonies, which rights they have also till of late enjoyed. But your memorialists humbly beg leave to represent to your lordships, that the act for granting certain stamp duties in the British colonies in America, &c., fills his majesty's American subjects with the deepest concern, as it tends to deprive them of the two fundamental and invaluable rights and liberties above mentioned; and that several other late acts of parliament, which extend the jurisdiction and power of courts of admiralty in the plantations beyond their limits in Great Britain, thereby make an unnecessary, unhappy distinction, as to the modes of trial between us and our fellow-subjects there, by whom we never have been excelled in duty and loyalty to our sovereign.

That from the natural connection between Great Britain and America, the perpetual continuance of which your memorialists most ardently desire, they conceive that nothing can conduce more to the interest of both, than the colonists, free enjoyment of their rights and liberties, and an affectinate intercourse between Great Britain and them. But your memorialists (not waiving their

claim to these rights, of which, with the most becoming veneration and deference to the wisdom and justice of your lordships, they apprehend, they cannot reasonably be deprived,) humbly represent, that, from the peculiar circumstances of these colonies, the duties imposed by the aforesaid act, and several other late acts of parliament, are extremely grievous and burthensome; and the payment of the several duties will very soon, for want of specie, become absolutely impracticable; and that the restrictions on trade by the said acts, will not only distress the colonies, but must be extremely detrimental to the trade and true interest of Great Britain.

Your memorialists, therefore, impressed with a just sense of the unfortunate circumstances of the colonies, the impending destructive consequences which must necessarily ensue from the execution of these acts, and animated with the warmest sentiments of filial affection for their mother country, most earnestly and humbly entreat your lordships will be pleased to hear their council in support of this memorial, and take the premises into your most serious consideration, and that your lordships will also be thereupon pleased to pursue such measures for restoring the just rights and liberties of the colonies, and preserving them for ever inviolate; for redressing their present, and preventing future grievances, thereby promoting the united interests of Great Britain and America, as your lordships, in your great wisdom, shall seem most conducive and effectual to that important end.

And your memorialists will pray, &c.

Then the congress adjourned to to-morrow morning, 9 o'clock.

Wednesday, Oct. 23d, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment.

The petition to the house of commons being engrossed, was read and compared, and is as follows, viz :

*To the honorable the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses, of
Great Britain, in parliament assembled,*

The petition of his majesty's dutiful, loyal subjects, the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, New-York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the government of the counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex, upon Delaware, and province of Maryland, in America.

Most humbly sheweth,

That the several late acts of parliament, imposing divers duties and taxes on the colonies, and laying the trade and commerce under very burthensome restrictions; but above all, the act for granting and applying certain stamp duties in America, have filled them with the deepest concern and surprise, and they humbly conceive the execution of them will be attended with consequences very injurious to the commercial interests of Great Britain and her colonies, and must terminate in the eventual ruin of the latter. Your petitioners, therefore, most ardently implore the attention of the honorable house to the united and dutiful representation of their circumstances, and to their earnest supplications for relief from their regulations, that have already involved this continent in anxiety, confusion and distress. We most sincerely recognise our allegiance to the crown, and acknowledge all due subordination to the parliament of Great Britain, and shall always retain the most grateful sense of their assistance and approbation; it is from and under the English constitution we derive all our civil and religious rights

and liberties ; we glory in being subjects of the best of kings, having been born under the most perfect form of government. But it is with the most ineffable and humiliating sorrow that we find ourselves of late deprived of the right of granting our own property for his majesty's service, to which our lives and fortunes are entirely devoted, and to which, on his royal requisitions, we have been ready to contribute to the utmost of our abilities.

We have also the misfortune to find that all the penalties and forfeitures mentioned in the stamp act, and divers late acts of trade extending to the plantations, are, at the election of the informers, recoverable in any court of admiralty in America. This, as the newly erected court of admiralty has a general jurisdiction over all British America, renders his majesty's subjects in these colonies liable to be carried, at an immense expense, from one end of the continent to the other. It always gives us great pain to see a manifest distinction made therein between the subjects of our mother country and the colonies, in that the like penalties and forfeitures recoverable there only in his majesty's courts of record, are made cognizable here by a court of admiralty. By this means we seem to be, in effect, unhappily deprived of two privileges essential to freedom, and which all Englishmen have ever considered as their best birthrights—that of being free from all taxes but such as they have consented to in person, or by their representatives, and of trial by their peers.

Your petitioners further shew, that the remote situation and other circumstances of the colonies, render it impracticable that they should be represented but in their respective subordinate legislatures ; and they humbly conceive that the parliament adhering strictly to the principles of the constitution, have never hitherto taxed any but those who were therein actually represented ; for this reason, we humbly apprehend, they never have taxed

Ireland, nor any other of the subjects without the realm. But were it ever so clear, that the colonies might in law be reasonably represented in the honorable house of commons, yet we conceive that very good reasons, from inconvenience, from the principles of true policy, and from the spirit of the British constitution, may be adduced to shew, that it would be for the real interest of Great Britain, as well as her colonies, that the late regulations should be rescinded, and the several acts of parliament imposing duties and taxes on the colonies, and extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty here, beyond their ancient limits, should be repealed.

We shall not attempt a minute detail of all the reasons which the wisdom of the honorable house may suggest, on this occasion, but would humbly submit the following particulars to their consideration :

That money is already very scarce in these colonies, and is still decreasing by the necessary exportation of specie from the continent for the discharging of our debts to British merchants ; that an immensely heavy debt is yet due from the colonists for British manufactures, and that they are still heavily burdened with taxes to discharge the arrearages due for aids granted by them in the late war ; that the balance of trade will ever be much against the colonies, and in favor of Great Britain, whilst we consume her manufactures ; the demand of which must ever increase in proportion to the number of inhabitants settled here, with the means of purchasing them. We, therefore, humbly conceive it to be the interest of Great Britain to increase rather than diminish those means, as the profit of all the trade of the colonies ultimately centre there to pay for her manufactures, as we are not allowed to purchase elsewhere, and by the consumption of which at the advanced prices the British taxes oblige the makers and venders to set on them, we

eventually contribute very largely to the revenues of the crown.

That, from the nature of American business, the multiplicity of suits and papers used in matters of small value, in a country where freeholds are so minutely divided, and property so frequently transferred, a stamp duty must be ever very burthensome and unequal.

That it is extremely improbable that the honorable house of commons should at all times be thoroughly acquainted with our condition, and all facts requisite to a just and equal taxation of the colonies.

It is also humbly submitted whether there be not a material distinction, in reason and sound policy, at least, between the necessary exercise of parliamentary jurisdiction in general acts, and the common law, and the regulations of trade and commerce, through the whole empire, and the exercise of that jurisdiction by imposing taxes on the colonies.

That the several subordinate provincial legislatures have been moulded into forms as nearly resembling that of the mother country, as by his majesty's royal predecessors was thought convenient ; and these legislatures seem to have been wisely and graciously established, that the subjects in the colonies might, under the due administration thereof, enjoy the happy fruits of the British government, which in their present circumstances they cannot be so fully and clearly availed of any other way.

Under these forms of government we and our ancestors have been born or settled, and have had our lives, liberties, and properties protected ; the people here as every where else, retain a great fondness of their old customs and usages, and we trust that his majesty's service, and the interest of the nation, so far from being obstructed, have been vastly promoted by the provincial legislatures.

That we esteem our connection with and dependence

on Great Britain, as one of our greatest blessings, and apprehend the latter will be sufficiently secure, when it is considered that the inhabitants in the colonies have the most unbounded affection for his majesty's person, family, and government, as well as for the mother country, and that their subordination to the parliament is universally acknowledged.

We, therefore, most humbly entreat that the honorable house would be pleased to hear our council in support of this petition, and to take our distressed and deplorable case into their serious consideration, and that the acts and clauses of acts so grievously restraining our trade and commerce, imposing duties and taxes on our property, and extending the jurisdiction of the court of admiralty beyond its ancient limits, may be repealed ; or that the honorable house would otherwise relieve your petitioners, as in your great wisdom and goodness shall seem meet.

And your petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

Then the congress adjourned until to-morrow morning, 10 o'clock.

Tuesday, Oct. 24th, 1765, A. M.—The congress met according to adjournment.

The congress took into consideration the manner in which their several petitions should be preferred and solicited in Great Britain, and thereupon came to the following determination, viz :

It is recommended by the congress to the several colonies to appoint special agents for soliciting relief from their present grievances, and to unite their utmost interest and endeavors for that purpose.

Voted, unanimously, that the clerk of this congress sign

the minutes of their proceedings, and deliver a copy for the use of each colony and province.

By order of the congress.

JOHN COTTON, *Clerk.*

A copy of the proceedings of the province of New Hampshire, as transmitted to the congress.

Province of *New Hampshire.*

In the House of Representatives, June 29th, 1765.

Mr. Speaker laid before the house a letter from the honorable speaker of the honorable representatives of the province of Massachusetts Bay, to the speaker of this assembly, proposing a meeting of committees from the several assemblies of the British colonies on the continent, at New-York, to consider of a general, united, dutiful, loyal, and humble representation of our committees, and for imploring his majesty and the parliament for relief; which being read,

Resolved, That notwithstanding we are sensible that such a representation ought to be made, and approve of the proposed method for obtaining thereof, yet the present situation of our governmental affairs will not permit us to appoint a committee to attend such meeting, but shall be ready to join in any address to his majesty and the parliament we may be honored with the knowledge of, probable to answer the proposed end.

A CLARKSON, *Clerk.*

A copy of a letter received from Georgia, during the sitting of the congress :

SAVANNAH, in Georgia, *Sept. 6th, 1765.*

SIR : Your letter dated in June last, acquainting me that the house of representatives of your province, had unani-

mously agreed to propose a meeting at the city of New-York, of committees from the houses of representatives of the several British colonies on this continent, on the first Tuesday in October next, to consult together on the present circumstances of the colonies, and the difficulties to which they are and must be reduced by the operation of the acts of parliament, for laying duties and taxes on the colonies, and to consider of an humble representation of their condition to his majesty and the parliament, and to implore relief, came to hand at an unlucky season, it being in the recess of the general assembly of this province. Nevertheless, immediately upon the receipt of your letter, I dispatched expresses to the several representatives of this province, acquainting them with the purport thereof, and requesting them to meet at this place without delay.

And accordingly they met here on Monday last, to the number of sixteen, being a large majority of the representatives of this province; the whole consisting of twenty-five persons, but his excellency our governor, being applied to, did not think it expedient to call them together on the occasion; which is the reason of not sending a committee as proposed by your house, for you may be assured, no representatives on this continent can more sincerely concur in the measures proposed, than do the representatives of the province now met together; neither can any people, as individuals, more warmly espouse the common cause of the colonies, than do the people of this province.

The gentlemen now present request, as a favor, you will be pleased to send me a copy of such representation as may be agreed upon by the several committees at New-York, and acquaint me how, and in what manner the same is to be laid before the king and parliament, whether by any person particularly authorized for that purpose, or by the colony agents. The general assembly of this province stands prorogued to the 22d day of October next, which is

the time it generally meets for the dispatch of the ordinary business of the province ; and I doubt not the representatives of this province will then, in their legislative capacity, take under consideration the grievances so justly complained of, and transmit their sense of the same to Great Britain, in such way as may seem best calculated to obtain redress, and so as to convince the sister colonies of their inviolable attachment to the common cause.

I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

ALEX. WYLLY.

To Samuel White, Esq., speaker of the house of representatives of Massachusetts Bay, in New England.

The two foregoing letters are true copies from the original.

Attest.

JOHN COTTON, *Clerk*.

APPENDIX.

I.

THE patriotic efforts of Henry Cruger, whilst Mayor of Bristol and member of Parliament, in behalf of his native country, are set forth in the following communications to "Niles's National Register," as well as the services of his uncle, John Cruger,* whilst Mayor of New-York :

THE FIRST AMERICAN ELECTED TO THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT—THE FIRST MOVEMENT OF THE REVOLUTION.

To Jeremiah Hughes, Esq., Editor of Niles's Weekly Register :

DEAR SIR :—In passing through Baltimore, last month, I had the pleasure of a short conversation with you on the subject of the early incidents of our country, during and previous to our glorious Revolution. I then referred you to a most remarkable and precious old record, preserved in that rare and valuable work of Mr. Niles, entitled, "The Acts and Principles of the Revolution." This antique record establishes a fact in our early history which appears to be almost (if not entirely) unknown to our citizens, namely : that the *very first movement of the Revolution* was made in the city of New-York, by the convoking and holding a Convention of the Colonies, as early as March, 1765, to remonstrate and protest against the oppressions of the Mother Country. In this venerable Journal of that Convention no mention is made of the master-spirits in the city of New-York who first suggested and carried through this most important movement, which may most properly be termed the *fountain spring* of our Revolution and Independenc. But, fortunately, I can afford you that information from authentic tradition in some of our oldest families in New-York, which establishes the fact that the first great movement originated with, and was carried through, by two gentlemen of this city, who were much distinguished in their day and generation. These gentlemen

* The first emigrant of this (Cruger) family, in 1660, came to America purely from a love of freedom and independence, this family in Bristol being of great wealth, and tracing their descent from Sir Philip Cruciger, (Cross-bearer) who went with King Richard to the Crusades.

were Robert Livingston and John Cruger, whose names you find among the first on the roll of that Convention. From the pen of the latter of those gentlemen proceeded the admirable Declaration of Rights, published in that Journal; and in all the proceedings of that Congress he took a leading part. In the year of its session he held the important offices of Speaker of the Assembly and Mayor of the city of New-York, and was, in other respects, one of its most distinguished citizens. Of these facts, as well as some others connected with our early history, you will find a record in the number of the Knickerbocker Magazine, for January, 1843, which I herewith send you, according to my promise. This record you will find in an editorial article, under the head of "*Election to Parliament of Burke and Cruger, for Bristol.*" in which some notices are given of the efforts of Mr. Henry Cruger in Parliament in favor of the Independence of our country, of which he was a native, being a nephew of the above-named Mr. John Cruger, and, like him, born in the city of New-York.

When I had the pleasure of conversing with you on these subjects, I promised to send you this brief notice, as well as some extracts from the speeches of Mr. Henry Cruger in Parliament, advocating our Independence. For these you were so kind as to promise me an insertion in your valuable Journal. The promised extracts I will endeavor to send you in a short time; and, in the meantime, would be much obliged by your insertion of the editorial notice above referred to.

In our brief conversation in reference to the ancient Journal of the Congress of 1765, held in New-York, you spoke of your intention to republish that precious and almost (if not quite) forgotten record. This intention I most earnestly hope you will soon put in force, as New-York has hitherto quietly and most strangely allowed both Boston and Mecklenburg (in North Carolina) to claim the honor of the first movements in the birth of our Revolution, in acts which occurred ten years later than this great and glorious proceeding in the city of New-York, which has justly been termed the "*Ovum Reipublicæ.*"

From the Knickerbocker of January, 1843.

THE ELECTION OF BURKE AND CRUGER, FOR BRISTOL.—We have received from a correspondent, evidently familiar with the facts which he lays before us, a communication touching upon our article in the November *Knickerbocker*, on the election of Burke and Cruger, for Bristol; referring to the sentiments expressed by the former on that occasion, and presenting extracts from his addresses, both before and after the election. We regret that, in looking over our articles filed for promised insertion, we find ourselves compelled to condense, to some extent, the interesting paper of our correspondent; taking care, however, as we hope,

to retain the more important particulars. The writer regrets that, while we were recalling the election scenes of Bristol and the remarks of Mr. Burke, we did not, at the same time, present a few extracts from the addresses delivered on the same (occasion by our former fellow-townsmen, Mr. Henry Cruger, who was three times elected to Parliament, and alike distinguished in and out of that body. His effective exertions in behalf of American liberty and American interests will not soon be forgotten. It is worthy of remark, too, that he was the first and, till within a few years, the only American elected to the British Parliament. Mr. Henry Cruger (who was Mayor of the city of Bristol at the time of his election as colleague of Mr. Burke,) was born in this city, in 1739. His father, who, like his son, had been Mayor of Bristol, was also a native of New-York; *his* father, one of the largest and most influential merchants of his day, having emigrated to America as early as 1660.

Among the sons of this first emigrant of one of our oldest Knickerbocker families, John (uncle of Henry) was three times Mayor of New-York, and Speaker of the House of Assembly, to which office he was elected in opposition to Hon. William Livingston, afterward Governor of New-Jersey.* He was also a delegate from this city to the first Congress of States held in America in 1765, whence the first protest was sent to the king and Parliament against their unauthorized encroachments upon the rights of the Colonists. Mr. Henry Cruger, the colleague of Burke, removed to Bristol when quite a youth, and was afterwards known as a large merchant: his elder brother, Nicholas, remaining in New-York, engaged in extensive commercial transactions, particularly with the West Indies, where, it may not be amiss to mention, he had it in his power to patronize the afterward distinguished statesman, General Alexander Hamilton, then an orphan boy in his counting-room, whom he sent in one of his own ships to this country for his education. General Hamilton was always proud to acknowledge and prompt to reciprocate these early kindnesses of Mr. Nicholas Cruger. Meantime, Mr. Henry Cruger, a gentleman of polished manners, well cultivated mind, and great personal popularity, was elected Mayor of Bristol; and it was through his urgent solicitation that his friend, Mr. Burke, was induced to become a candidate for Parliament, he being then an almost entire stranger to the people of Bristol; and it is believed that mainly through the influence of Mr. Cruger, the election of Burke was secured; since, elevated and enviable as was his subsequent renown, he had at that time obtained but little distinction.

In some of the first-published notices of the life of Mr. Burke, a ridicu-

* It was during the heat of this political contest that the famous old song was in vogue, which ended with the chorus of

"The Livingstons and Yanceys,
The Crugers and De Lanceys."

lous and malicious anecdote was related by some enemy of Mr. Cruger, to the effect that he made no address to the people at the polls, but contented himself with the exclamation—" *I say ditto to Mr. Burke!*" The absurdity of this story is proved by the fact recorded in the newspapers of that period, namely: that Mr. Cruger, a well known citizen and Mayor of Bristol, in a very able and eloquent opening address, to which his colleague handsomely referred, introduced Mr. Burke for the first time to the electors of the city. Mr. Cruger, therefore, preceeded and did not succeed Mr. Burke in addressing the people. Our correspondent, who has perused the address in question, was impressed with the elegance of its style and the cogency of its reasoning; and he assures us that the journals of that day award high praise to the speaker's command of language, his flashes of wit and his classical illustrations—attributes well known to all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance or had listened to him in Parliament. The amusing occurrence referred to occurred in the case of a Mr. Carrington, on another occasion; but, in the newspapers of the day, the anecdote was related in connection with the initial "Mr. C——," under the cloak of which some enemy of Mr. Cruger's, long after maliciously applied the story to him. Some of his speeches in Parliament have lately been re-published in the *Life of Peter Van Schaack, Esq.*, heretofore noticed in the *Knickerbocker*. Mr. Van Schaack, having married a sister of Mr. Cruger's, a long and interesting correspondence on American affairs was maintained between them. Among the speeches contained in this biography, is the maiden-speech delivered by Mr. Cruger in Parliament. In relation to this speech and the effect it produced on the minds of his hearers, a letter from the Rev. Dr. Vardill, rector of Trinity Church, New-York, who was then in England, contains the following remarks:

"Mr. Cruger's fame has, I suppose, by this time reached his native shore. His applause has been universally sounded in this country. *Administration* applauds him for his moderation; *Opposition* for the just line he has drawn, and all men for his modest eloquence and graceful delivery. His enemies are silenced by the strongest confutation of their charges against him of illiberal invective against the people of England, by his manly defence of his country, and honorable approbation of his opponents wherever he thought them justifiable. I was in the house on the debate. It was remarkably crowded with members, and the galleries were filled with peers and persons of distinction. When Mr. Cruger rose, there was a deep silence. He faltered a little at first, but, as he proceeded, the cry of "Hear him! hear him!" animated him with resolution. Hood, the Irish orator, sat behind me. He asked, 'Who is that? who is that? A young speaker? Whoever he is, he speaks more eloquently than any man I have yet heard in the house.' I took great pains to learn people's

sentiments, and found them all in his favor. Mr. Garrick, a few days after, in a discussion on the subject, said, 'he never saw human nature more amiably displayed than in the modest manner of address, pathos of affection for his country, and graceful gesture, exhibited by Mr. Cruger in his speech.' I am thus particular because you must be curious to know what reception the first American member met with in the most august assembly in Europe. My heart beat high with anxiety, I trembled when he arose with the most awful and affecting jealousy for the honor of my country. When 'Hear him! hear him!' echoed through the house, joy rushed through every vein, and I seemed to glory in being a New-Yorker.'

"It seems to me, Mr. Editor," writes our correspondent, "that there could be no more fitting vehicle for publishing and recording these notices of the distinguished reputation of an accomplished son of New-York, than her own peculiar Knickerbocker Magazine; especially, too, since the high reputation commemorated was earned in defence of American rights, and in the midst of the most splendid galaxy of statesmen the world has ever seen. For among his friends and associates in Parliament, as recorded in the Life of Van Schaack, were Burke, Fox, and Sheridan; and 'particularly with Charles James Fox his political principles brought him into great intimacy; and he was one of that illustrious band of the champions of freedom who espoused the American cause in the British Parliament. With the distinguished reputation of their opponents, constituting a long list of eminent British statesmen of that day, every educated man is, of course, familiar.

Mr. Cruger returned to his native city of New-York, where he resided during the latter portion of his life, and where he died, at the advanced age of ninety years.' We have in our possession several of the doggerel hand-bills alluded to in our November issue, but, having already presented liberal extracts from this species of election-literature, we shall forego their publication for the present. "Oh! the Golden Days of Harry Cruger" is quite a long 'poem,' in which enthusiastic admiration of that gentleman, and hatred of his opponents, are described in language unmistakably plain. Kindred songs, embracing labored acrostics upon his name, sufficiently attest the great popularity which Mr. Cruger must have won at the hands of his constituents.

II.

Extracts from the first speech in Parliament of Henry Cruger, Esq.

TO J. HUGHES, ESQ., EDITOR OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER :

DEAR SIR :—I proceed to redeem my promise to you of furnishing some extracts from the speeches of Mr. Henry Cruger, (originally of New-York,) delivered in the British Parliament during the year 1774, in defence of American rights and liberties. Mr. Cruger, though born in New-York, resided chiefly in Bristol, (England) where he was, like his father, a wealthy merchant, and Mayor of the city at the time of his election to Parliament as colleague of Edmund Burke. In the speech which he delivered at the *hustings* in Bristol, when he *introduced* Mr. Burke for the first time to his constituents, he says, in regard to the impending quarrel between Great Britain and the Colonies :—“As far as the impulse of my power can be felt, it shall be exerted to heal and reconcile the unhappy differences now existing, and not to foment them. I consider the commercial interests of England and the Colonies as one and the same—they are reciprocal and perfectly coincident. God, nature, and sound policy, have linked them together in the strongest bonds of amity, mutual interest and safety, and he who would divide them, has either a weak head or a bad heart.”

In Parliament, during the session of that year, he used every effort to induce the ministry to adopt conciliatory measures, urging upon them the danger of driving the colonies into open revolution, or into the arms of a foreign power to escape the tyrannical oppressions of a relentless mother. In these warning predictions, not only in this, but in all his subsequent speeches, Mr. Cruger proved himself to be a true prophet as well as an eloquent and patriotic champion of his native land.

In his first speech in Parliament upon this subject, on the 16th of December, 1774, he commences as follows :*

“I rise, sir, to say a few words on this important subject with all the diffidence and awe which must strike the mind on a first attempt to speak before so august an assembly. Had I remained silent on this occasion, I must have condemned myself for seeming to desert a cause which I

* For the following and other speeches of Mr. Henry Cruger, see “The Universal Magazine,” and other periodicals of that day.

feel it my duty to espouse. I cannot but be heard with candor and consideration by *Englishmen*, when what I offer is dictated by a *love for my country*.

“I am far from approving *all* the proceedings in America. Many of their measures have been a discredit to their cause. Their rights might have been asserted without violence, and their claims stated with temper as well as firmness. But permit me to say, sir, that if they have erred, it must be considered as the failing of human nature. A people animated with the love of liberty, and alarmed with the apprehension of its being in danger, will unavoidably run into excesses. The history of mankind declares it in every page, and *Britons* ought to view with an eye of tenderness, acts of imprudence to which their fellow-citizens in America may have been hurried; not, as has been unkindly said, by a mere rebellious spirit, but by that generous spirit of freedom which has often led their own ancestors into indiscretions. But, sir, you may be assured that acts of severity will be far from having a tendency to eradicate jealousy and discontent; on the contrary, they must produce new fears and new complaints, and endanger that attachment and obedience which kindness and gentleness might have insured.

“No country has ever been more happy in her colonies than Great Britain; cemented by mutual interests, (until the era of the fatal Stamp Act) they flourished in an intercourse of amity, protection and obedience, supporting and supported by each other. Before that hated period, you met with no instances of disobedience to your laws—no denial of the jurisdiction of Parliament—no mark of jealousy—no murmurs of discontent. But our Colonists ever loved *liberty*. Their zeal for it is coeval with their first emigration to America. They were persecuted for it in this country, and they sought a sanctuary in the unexplored regions of the west. They cleared their inhospitable wilds, cultivated their lands, and poured the wealth which they derived from agriculture and commerce into the bosom of their mother country.

“You protected them in their infant state, and they returned the obligation by confining to you the benefits of their trade. You regulated their commerce for the advantage of this country, and they never evinced the slightest opposition either to the authority or the exercise of this power. Were these evidences of a spirit of disaffection toward Great Britain, or ingratitude for her protection? Were they not, on the contrary, proofs that if the same course of mild and lenient government had been pursued, the same cordiality, attachment and submission would have been continued.

“Every American who loves his country must wish the prosperity of Great Britain, must desire that their union may ever subsist in uninterrupted harmony. If the parental trunk be injured, the branches must suf-

fer with it. A due subordination on the part of the colonies is essential to this union. I acknowledge, sir, that there must exist a power somewhere to superintend and regulate the movements of the whole, for the attainment and preservation of our common happiness; and this supreme power can be justly and adequately exercised only by the legislature of Great Britain. In this doctrine the Colonies tacitly and willingly acquiesced, and were happy. England has enjoyed from it all the advantages of an exclusive trade. Why, then, would you strain this authority so far as to render a submission to it impossible without a surrender of those liberties which are the most valuable to civil society, and which were ever acknowledged to be the birthright of an Englishman. While Great Britain derives from the Colonies the most ample supplies of wealth by her commerce, is it not an absurd fatuity to close up these channels for the sake of a claim of imposing such taxes as (though but a young member) I will dare to say, never have and never will defray the expense and trouble of collecting them.

"The expediency of coercive measures is much insisted on by some, who, I am sorry to say, seem to consider more the distress and difficulty into which they may involve the Americans, than the benefits they can procure from such vindictive conduct to this country. Humanity, however, will prompt the generous mind to weep over severities, even when they are necessary. And the prudent statesman will reflect that the Colonies cannot suffer without injury to the mother country. They are your *customers*—they consume your *manufactures*—and, by distressing them, if you do not drive them to foreign markets, you will at least disable them from taking your commodities, and from making you adequate returns for what they have taken.

"Even should coercive measures reduce them to an acknowledgemen of the equity of Parliamentary taxation, what are the advantages that will result from it? Can it be believed that Americans will be dragooned into a conviction of this right? Will severities increase their affection and make them more desirous of a connection with, and dependence on Great Britain? Is it not, on the contrary, reasonable to conclude that the effect will be an increase of jealousy and discontent? That they will seek all occasions of evading laws imposed on them by violence? That they will be restless under the yoke and think themselves happy in any opportunity of flying to the protection of some other power, from the subjection of a mother whom they consider cruel and vindictive?

"I would not be understood, sir, to deny altogether the good intentions of administration. The abilities of the minister,* it seems, are universally acknowledged. But, sir, I must add the maxim of '*humanum est errari*.'" And though an American, I must applaud his zeal for the dignity of par-

* Lord North.

liament, and must think the impolicy and inexpediency of the late measures may reasonably be imputed to the difficulty and embarrassments of the occasion, and the unsettled and undefined nature of the dependence of the Colonies on the mother country. But, on the other hand, candor must admit the same apology for any violence or mistakes of the Americans.

“But, sir, since these measures have been found, by sad experience, to be totally inexpedient; since they have served only to widen the breach instead of closing it—have diminished the obedience of the Colonies instead of confirming it—have increased their turbulence and opposition instead of allaying them—it may well be hoped that a different course of conduct and of treatment may be pursued; and some firm, enlightened and liberal constitution be adopted by the wisdom of this House, which may secure the Colonists in the enjoyment of their liberties, while it maintains the just supremacy of parliament.”

This, I think, my dear sir, will be sufficient for the present article; as I do not wish to engross too much space in your valuable journal, even for these most interesting records of the eloquent and patriotic efforts of an American orator, who was *the first*, and until very recently, *the only* American ever elected to the British Parliament. It is my intention to send you, occasionally, further extracts from the speeches of Mr. Henry Cruger, while Mayor of Bristol, both on the hustings and in parliament, advocating, with ardent zeal and lofty patriotism, even in the land of the oppressor, the rights and liberties of his country.

III.

Extracts from the second speech of Henry Cruger, in Parliament, on Mr. Fox's motion for “An Inquiry into the causes of the ill success of his Majesty's arms in North America.”

“MR. SPEAKER: The honorable gentleman who opened this debate, has spoken so fully and eloquently to every part of the question, that anything further in support of this motion may appear unnecessary. But, sir, when a subject of so much importance is before the House, it behooves every man to lay aside all reserve and diffidence, and to express his sentiments with freedom and candor. If there is any point in which the different interests of this House should unite, it must be in a conviction of the

necessity and expediency of inquiring into the causes of the present alarming state of public affairs. By discovering what has proved injurious and ruinous in the past, we may learn at least to avoid the same pernicious steps for the future. If their measures had been conducted with justice and prudence, it is a duty that Administration owe to their characters, to disarm, by a free examination, that censure on their conduct which may possibly arise from ignorance. But if they love darkness rather than light, '*because their deeds are evil*,' it becomes the duty of the guardians of the nation to drag their miscarriages and misdeeds into open day, and to expose them, with all their deformities, to public investigation.

"If, Mr. Speaker, such an inquiry was ever necessary, the present time assuredly demands it. If we look to the past, one uniform train of disappointments and misfortunes crowd the view. If to the future, a gloomy prospect of increasing miseries, from a continuance of the same left-handed policy, and ill-projected measures.

"We are involved, sir, in a war in which success itself would be ruinous to Great Britain. The colonies, as if animated with one soul, are determined to perish or be free. We are told they must be subdued. We shall soon be called upon to make new exertions of force. Everything wears the aspect of hostile preparations; and, as if disappointment could create confidence, we are urged to pursue the same fatal measures by arguments drawn from their miscarriage. '*Nothing*' (it is now said,) '*will satisfy America but independence*—that the people of that country have almost unanimously taken up arms—they act not only on the defensive, but have endeavored to deprive you of all Canada. An inquiry (they say,) would produce a fatal procrastination—that the urgency and necessity of the case demand and justify immediate vigor and execution. These measures must be pursued, or the government of the colonies surrendered to an ambiguous Congress.'

"Such, sir, are the reasons advanced to preclude inquiry, and to procure a hasty acquiescence in schemes of policy, on which the fate of the empire so materially depends. By such arguments as these our jealousy is excited, and our resentment inflamed, against a people, who, after the most earnest endeavors to preserve their liberties from invasion, by petition and remonstrance—after having repeatedly submitted their complaints (without effect) to the justice of parliament, and laid them humbly at the foot of the throne—after beholding the most formidable preparations to divest them of their Rights by the sword—after finding hostilities already commenced, and fresh violence threatened, have taken up arms in their own defence, and endeavored to repel destructive force by force. The complexion and character, sir, of their present opposition (whether unjust or honorable,) rests not on their present measures, but arises from,

and must be weighed by the causes which have made such conduct and such measures necessary. A free and impartial inquiry, therefore, into the leading and primary causes is indispensably necessary to a just decision of the case. If their claims of exemption from Parliamentary taxation are founded in equity and the principles of the constitution—if they have been driven by a wanton, cruel and impolitic attack on their privileges to their present desperate defence—then, sir, the whole guilt and censure is chargeable on those, and those alone, whose ambition and ill-directed measures have forced them to those extremities. Thus also, if a form of government, is introduced into Canada, [breathing little of the spirit of English liberty,] and intended to link the Canadians to the chain of ministerial influence—if they scrupled not to make a religion which has so often deluged Europe with blood an engine of their despotism to crush the Protestant colonies—if every artifice was used to seduce and employ a servile, bigoted people to subvert the liberties of America, can we wonder, sir, can we complain, if the colonists wisely diverted the storm, and secured a country to their own alliance, the strength and arms of which were avowedly to be directed to their destruction?

“When what was dearer to them than their lives—their liberties—were at stake—when, Mr. Speaker, their opposition to government reached no higher than petition and remonstrance, then they were stigmatized with want of courage. Every method was taken to irritate them. Insults on their character as a people were added to encroachments on their Rights as citizens. The partisans of confident oppression represented them as a herd of pusillanimous wretches, whom the appearance of martial array would terrify into submission. How unjust—how impolitic, to reduce men to the miserable alternative of being branded with the epithet of cowards, or of taking up arms to vindicate their injured honor and violated liberties—first, to compel them to resistance, and then to derive arguments of their guilt from their vigor, courage and success. How contemptible the cause which pleads the misfortunes it has occasioned as reasons for its support!

“The arguments of Administration, stripped of their false colorings, with all humility, I conceive to be these: ‘We have plunged Great Britain into a most expensive and ruinous contest with her colonies; we have opened the door for endless animosities, by reviving disputed questions and claims which shake the foundation of the empire. The measures we have pursued have increased the storm, and multiplied the common misfortunes. We have united all America in a firm league against you. Your trade has been impaired—your ships insulted and taken. We have lost for you every place of strength or importance in the colonies; we have left you an army broken by sickness, fatigue and want, and now perishing under all the mortifications, ignominy and

miseries of an inglorious imprisonment. These (say they) are our pleas for support—these are the recommendations of our councils. We lay before you the disasters and evils which our past measures have produced, to persuade you to place new confidence in our wisdom, and to give more liberal aid to our judicious schemes for the future.’

“These however, sir, are not the only ‘*blushing honors*’ which deck the brows of the present Administration. They have lately displayed the happy art of drawing arguments in their favor from the misfortunes of their friends, as well as from the success of their enemies, and thus prove themselves as incapable of gratitude as of justice. * When gentlemen in this House (influenced by motives of humanity,) recommended an exception of the friends of Government in the colonies from the rigors of the late prohibitory bill, Administration suddenly changed its voice, and those who just before had boasted that a majority of the Americans were friendly to their cause, and only waited an opportunity to declare it with safety, now pronounced that no distinction could be made, for that they had preserved *at best* ‘a shameful neutrality,’ and deserved to be subject to the common calamity of their country. This, sir, was the liberal reward bestowed on men who espoused their cause from principle, and maintained it undaunted and unsupported through obloquy and the most imminent danger to their lives, their fortunes and their families. By this impolicy, (to call it by no harsher name,) the command and management of the key to American affairs has been lost to this country; a speedy and effectual security of which might have saved us from the present gloomy prospect of intestine carnage and accumulating misery. Surely, sir, the representative body of the nation are bound in duty to their constituents to examine the reasons of such neglect and misconduct; and those in particular who are the asserters of parliamentary supremacy are concerned to inquire why so effectual a method of weakening the opposition in America and supporting their own adherents has been totally neglected.

“But, sir, there is no necessity of dwelling on this circumstance to prove the obligations this country is under to ministers. Disappointment and disgrace have marked all their measures, and, as if miracles had been wrought to strike conviction on this House, they have not even once blundered into success. It may, therefore, reasonably be hoped, that before we blindly proceed any farther, we may not only pause to contemplate our present situation, and the ground we have already passed over, but pay particular attention to that which lies before us.

“Admitting for the present, sir, that a force sufficient to subdue the colonies can be sent out—admitting that this country will patiently bear the enormous weight of accumulated taxes, which so distant and unequal a war will require—admitting that foreign powers (the natural enemies of Britain,) will, with composure and self-denial, neglect so favorable an

opportunity of distressing their rivals—admitting that your fleets, unopposed, shall level to the ground those cities which rose under your protection, became the pillars of your commerce, and your nation's boast—admitting that foreign mercenaries spread desolation, that thousands fall before them, and that, humbled under the combined woes of poverty, anarchy, want and defeat, the exhausted colonies full suppliant at the feet of their conquerors—admitting all this will be the case, (which cannot well be expected from the past,) there necessarily follows a most momentous question: What are the great advantages that Great Britain is to receive in exchange for the blessings of peace and a lucrative commerce, for the affection and loyalty, for the prosperity, for the lives of so many of its useful subjects sacrificed? Would the bare acknowledgement of a right in Parliament to tax them, compensate for the millions expended, the dangers incurred, the miseries entailed, the destruction of human happiness and of life that must ensue from a war with our colonies, united as they are in one common cause, and fired to desperate enthusiasm by apprehensions of impending slavery? Or can you be so absurd as to imagine that concessions extorted in a time of danger and of urgent misery, will form a bond of lasting union? Impoverished and undone by their exertions, and the calamities of war, instead of being able to repay the expenses of this country, or to supply a revenue, they would stand in need of your earliest assistance to revive depressed and almost extinguished commerce, as well as to renew and uphold their necessary civil establishments.

“I am well aware, sir, that it is said we must maintain the dignity of Parliament. Let me ask what dignity is that which will not descend to make millions happy—which will sacrifice the treasures and best blood of the nation to extort submissions, fruitless submissions, that will be disavowed and disregarded the moment the compulsory, oppressive force is removed? What dignity is that which, to enforce a disputed mode of obtaining a revenue, will destroy commerce, spread poverty and desolation, and dry up every channel, every source, from which either revenue or any real substantial benefit can be expected?

“Is it not high time then, Mr. Speaker, to examine the full extent of our danger, to pause and mark the paths which have misled us, and the wretched, bewildered guides who have brought us into our present difficulties? Let us seek out the destroying angel, and stop his course, while we have yet anything valuable to preserve. The breach is not yet irreparable, and permit me, with all deference, to say, I have not a doubt but that liberal and explicit terms of reconciliation, with a full and firm security against any unjust or oppressive exercise of parliamentary taxation, if held out to the colonies before the war takes a wider and more destructive course, will lead speedily to a settlement, and recall the

former years of peace, when the affections and interests of Great Britain and America were one.

“But, sir, if, on the contrary, we are to plunge deeper into this sea of blood ; if we are to sacrifice the means and materials of revenue for unjust distinctions about the modes of raising it ; if the laurels we can gain, and the dignity of Parliament we are to establish, can be purchased only by the miseries of our fellow-subjects, whose losses are our own ; if the event is precarious, and the cause alien to the spirit and humanity of Englishmen ; if the injury is certain, and the object of success unsubstantial and insecure, how little soever the influence my poor opinion and arguments can have on this House, I shall at least free my conscience by having explicitly condemned all such impolitic, unjust, inadequate, injudicious measures, and by giving to this motion my most hearty concurrence and support.”

IV.

THE members of this primordial Congress were, without exception, men of great distinction in the several provinces which they then represented. Many of them—such as James Otis, Timothy Ruggles, Cæsar Rodney, Thomas McKean, the Livingstons and Rutledges—were among the earliest and most zealous originators of our first struggles for independence ; and several on this roll of patriots, were also participators in the high honor of inscribing their names upon the sacred scroll which proclaimed our country to be one of the independent nations of the earth. Among these were the following distinguished names :

PHILIP LIVINGSTON was one of the illustrious band of patriots who were the signers of our Declaration of Independence. His services to his native city and State were devoted and unremitted. For many years in succession he served as alderman in the city of New-York, and member of the colonial Assembly ; in both of which bodies he was greatly distinguished for his talents and industry in discharging the duties of chairman of several of the most important committees. He was not only a leading member in the “Stamp Act Congress, of 1765,” but of the first Congress at Philadelphia, in 1774, and the three subsequent Congresses at the same place ; and in June, 1778, he died, during the session of that body at York, Pennsylvania, universally esteemed and regretted. (For the particulars of his useful and valuable life, see a most interesting

sketch in the "Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence.")

JOHN MORTON, of *Pennsylvania*, was another of the eminent men who affixed their signature to that immortal deed. He had been for many years one of the judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and one of her delegates in Congress, from the year 1774 until the period of his death. (See his biography in the above-named work.)

THOMAS McKEAN, of *Delaware*, had also the exalted privilege of signing that sacred proclamation. He had enjoyed the highest confidence of his fellow-citizens from his earliest maturity until the day of his death, having held almost every important office in his native State. In the year 1774 he was at the same time elected President of Delaware and Chief Justice of Pennsylvania. The latter office he held with great distinction for a long series of years. In 1777 he was again elected President of Delaware, member of Congress, and Chief Justice of Pennsylvania; in 1781, President of Congress; and in 1799, Governor of Pennsylvania, to which office he was several times re-elected. He had also rendered important services to his country as a field-officer during the War of the Revolution. (See the "Biography of the Signers.")

CÆSAR RODNEY was, in every respect, one of the ablest of the great men who gave birth to our independence; tracing his descent to one of the oldest of the noble families of Great Britain, he was yet one of the most democratic of that glorious band who signed the charter of our liberties. In his own State he was elected to almost every leading office in the gift of the people. Among others, he was for many years judge of the Supreme Court, and President of the State. To his eminent abilities and services as a civilian and statesman, he also added very important services as a general officer in the Continental Army. In the very interesting notice of his life published by Sanderson, are several confidential letters to him from the Father of our Country.

THOMAS LYNCH was one of the earliest and most energetic of the patriots of South Carolina—for many years a leading member of her provincial Assembly, and father of the distinguished signer of the Declaration of Independence.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON was much distinguished in his day for high talent and ardent patriotism. He was the father of the afterward eminent Chancellor Livingston, and cousin of his colleague in Congress, the Hon. Philip Livingston.

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JOURNAL

OF THE

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OF THE

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